

Minutes of the Veneta City Council

January 12, 2009

Present: Mayor Sharon Hobart-Hardin, Darrell Carman, Marion Esty and Sandra Larson

Others: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Jerri Moore, Finance Director; Brian Issa, Community Services Director; Sheryl Hackett, City Recorder; Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder; Bill Baker, Bruce Dickson, Kari Westlund, Allen Merrill, Gifford Tallmadge and Ephraim Payne, West Lane News

1. SWEARING IN OF NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL MEMBERS

City Recorder Sheryl Hackett swore in Sharon Hobart-Hardin as Mayor, and Marion Esty and Sandra Larson, as City Councilors.

PRESENTATION OF THE FERN RIDGE VISITOR READINESS REPORT

Bill Baker and Bruce Dickson of Destination Marketing gave the Council a power point presentation of their Fern Ridge Visitor's Readiness Report.

Kari Westlund of Convention & Visitors Association of Lane County, Oregon (CVALCO) spoke briefly about their efforts to develop and promote a county-wide tourism marketing program. CVALCO is working toward effectively promoting the Lane County region by developing a new organizational name, slogan and overall marketing focus.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin called the Veneta City Council to order at 8:15 p.m. She said there will be an executive session of the Veneta City Council immediately following tonight's Veneta Urban Renewal Agency meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Charlie Hamada, President, Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce, 24949 Highway 126, Veneta, OR

Mr. Hamada congratulated Mayor Hobart-Hardin and the new City Councilors on their recent elections. He said the Chamber has a new Board of Directors and they are looking forward to working more closely with the City. They will be working in a new direction to sustain and support the local economy. He asked the Council to endorse the newly created ex-officio position in the Chamber Board of Directors.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: Marion Esty made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Darrell Carman seconded the motion.

Vote: Marion Esty, aye; Sandra Larson, aye; Mayor Hobart-Hardin, aye; and Darrell Carman, aye.

The consent agenda as approved included Minutes for December 8, 2008, December 29, 2008, bills paid/payable for December 2008 and the Public Works Activity Report for December 2008.

4. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a. FROM MAYOR/COUNCILORS

- (1) Process for appointment of new Council member to fill vacancy
Mayor Hobart-Hardin said three applications were received for the Council vacancy. She asked Ric to research how other cities conduct their Council appointment process. Mayor Hobart-Hardin and Ric suggested interviews could

be conducted at a special Council meeting tentatively set for Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.

The consensus of the Council was to proceed with the Special City Council meeting set for January 21, 2009 to interview the three applicants applying for the City Council vacancy.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin suggested the meeting should be advertised as a special Council meeting. She would like to fill the Council vacancy at the January 21st meeting in order to have a full Council at the January 26, 2009 Council meeting. Mayor Hobart-Hardin also suggested that by swearing in the new Councilor that individual could participate with the 2009 Goal Setting session.

(2) Election of new Council President

MOTION: Darrell Carman made a motion to appoint Marion Esty as City Council President. Sandra Larson seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 4-0.

(3) Presentation by the Title VII Indian Education (NATIVES) Program on the 25th Annual Pow Wow held at Elmira High School

Allen Merrill is the new program coordinator for the Indian Education Program through Lane Education Service District (Lane ESD). He said the program previously operated under the name "Title VII Indian Education (NATIVES) Program". He said the name was changed after the Bethel School District and Eugene School District 28J applied jointly for federal grant funds. He said the Pow Wow will be held at Elmira High School on Saturday, February 7, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. He said this is the 25th year the Pow Wow has been held at Elmira High School. He said the banner they purchased with funds donated from the City Council will be hung on Luther Lane. He said attendance has declined over the last few years but they are still expecting 500 participants. He said the event offers advertising opportunities to area businesses including donating their services to be raffled during the Pow Wow. He would also like to connect and/or promote the program with the City and suggested listing the event on the City's website. He handed out flyers to the Council and left some for the reception desk. He also offered to provide information about the Pow Wow to local businesses.

Gifford Tallmadge is a member of the Parent Committee for the Indian Education Program. He said both the Program and the City could benefit from the City promoting the Pow Wow. He said people come from all over the state to attend the Pow Wow. He said they are also discussing changing the name from "Elmira Pow Wow" to "Fern Ridge Pow Wow" to make it more of a community event.

In response to a question from Darrell Carman, Mr. Merrill said Lane ESD changed the name when they rewrote their request for federal grants. He said the Pow Wow still qualifies for Title VII funding.

In response to a question from Marion Esty, Mr. Merrill said speaking at the Fern Ridge Library would be an opportunity to promote their program and event. He said the Indian community is very small and participation has declined over the years. They would like to increase their activities.

- (4) Request for financial assistance of \$500 for Project Homeless Connect for Lane County

Sharon Hobart-Hardin said the Project Homeless Connect for Lane County will be held March 6, 2009. She realized the Project is in need of financial assistance, however, she is concerned our homeless community may not get notification of the event or possibly not have transportation to the event. She suggested postponing the financial assistance decision and requested staff to research how this event may or may not benefit our homeless community and how many local homeless residents had previously participated in this event.

Sandra Larson said the Garcia Center would be able to provide information about the event to our homeless community and possibly assist with transportation.

The consensus of the Council was to postpone making a financial contribution to the Project Homeless Connect for Lane County until more information is provided.

In response to a question from Darrell Carman, Mayor Hobart-Hardin said Project Homeless Connect for Lane County is funded through United Way of Oregon.

- (5) Request from Kaleidoscope for fee waiver and use of the Veneta Community Center

LuAnn Krueger of Kaleidoscope is requesting the use of the Community Center to hold rehearsals for the play she is directing "Is There a Doctor in the House"? She would like to have one rehearsal the last week of January and rehearsals twice a week during February and March and the first two weeks of April. The rental fee would be approximately \$1,000. The Council approved her request last year.

In response to a question from Darrell Carman, Ric said staff did not research last year's rehearsal dates.

Sandra Larson said the plays contribute to our community. She said it would be a considerable expenditure on Kaleidoscope's part if they had to pay the rental fee.

Marion Esty had no problem with allowing the waiver but cautioned staff about possible rehearsal changes.

In response to a question from Sandra Larson, Ric said the Council often approves a rental fee waiver if the requestor is a non-profit organization.

MOTION: Darrell Carman made a motion to approve waiving the rental fee to Kaleidoscope for the use of the Community Center to hold rehearsals. Sandra Larson seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 4-0.

5. STAFF REPORTS

a. FINANCE DIRECTOR JERRI MOORE

- (1) **Resolution No. 987 - A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AN IDENTITY THEFT PROGRAM AND PROCEDURES TO COMPLY WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND LAWS RELATING TO UTILITY BILLING**

At the December 8, 2008 Council meeting Jerri Moore provided the Council with information on the Identity Theft Program. At that time she said a resolution would be presented to the Council for approval at tonight's meeting. She presented the resolution for Council approval.

In response to a question from Mayor Hobart-Hardin if the new utility software would include additional safeguards to the identify theft program, Jerri said staff had not been able to address that specifically but once the software decision has been made she will discuss the matter with the software vendor.

MOTION: Marion Esty made a motion to approve Resolution No. 987. Sandra Larson seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 4-0.

- (2) **Resolution No. 988 - A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SIGNERS ON VARIOUS BANKING ACCOUNTS FOR THE CITY OF VENETA, AND REPEALING RESOLUTION 960**

Jerri said in order for the City to continue to do its banking, Resolution 988 is required for new signers.

MOTION: Darrell Carman made a motion to approve Resolution No. 988. Sandra Larson seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 4-0.

b. **COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR BRIAN ISSA**

- (1) Discussion on Senior/Low Income Discount Policy
Brian reviewed his memo relating to the current 25% discount (\$2.25/mo) on the water base rate for senior citizens. He said the City does not offer a water base rate discount to low income households but does offer a 25% discount (\$10.50/mo) on the sewer base rate. He said in previous discussions, the Council indicated they would like to examine a possible change to the available discounts. Staff recommended at a minimum that eligible groups be made consistent between the two funds. Staff needed direction from the Council on which demographic group(s) the City is trying to assist with these discounts. Brian's research indicated that most residents who currently qualify for a senior discount would also qualify for a low income discount if the senior discount were dropped.

Brian said the water base rate discount would have little budgetary impact. He said the current sewer base rate has been in effect for several years so initiating a discount is not likely to be a problem until staff has an opportunity to perform a more in-depth study as part of a sewer rate analysis.

Staff recommended the Council drop the current senior discount in favor of having a 25% discount only for low income residents for both water and sewer accounts.

Darrell Carman felt the low income application process is somewhat cumbersome. He suggested the City offer discounts for both low income and senior citizens for both water and sewer accounts.

Ric said Kim Kaufman of the Garcia Center said residents have told him they would also like a discount on the sewer base rate. Ric said in the near future we could see a greater number of senior citizens moving to the area which could mean 30 to 35% of households would qualify for a senior citizen discounts.

In response to a question from Sandra Larson, Jerri said the low income application process is fairly simple. She said the City provides the application forms to Kim Kaufman. He reviews the applications for completeness and returns them to Jerri for review. She then passes them on to Ann for processing. She said residents are required to apply for a low income discount annually. She said it's not much of a time consuming task for staff.

Sandra Larson felt being over 62 years of age shouldn't qualify a resident for a discount.

Marion Esty and Mayor Hobart-Hardin agreed the City should offer a discount on the water and sewer base rate to low income residents only.

Jerri said based upon direction from the Council, staff would create a resolution that would implement the Council's desire.

MOTION: Sandra Larson made a motion to direct staff to draft a resolution establishing a discount to the water and sewer base rate for low income residents. Marion Esty seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 3-1. Darrell Carman voted no.

6. OTHER

Ric said the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors is creating a new non-voting position on the Chamber Board of Directors. The Chamber is requesting the City Council appoint a representative of the City of Veneta to fill this position as an acting liaison between the City and the Chamber Board.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin recommended Ric Ingham to the position.

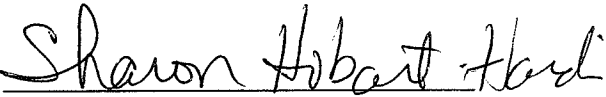
MOTION: Marion Esty made a motion to accept the request from the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce and appointed Ric Ingham, City Administrator to the non-voting liaison position on the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Darrell Carman seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 4-0.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin temporarily adjourned the Veneta City Council at 8:59 p.m. At 9:10 p.m. Mayor Hobart-Hardin reopened the Veneta City Council meeting and immediately moved into an Executive Session. After making no decisions during the Executive Session, Mayor Hobart-Hardin adjourned the Executive Session and returned to the City Council meeting at 9:30 p.m.


MOTION: Marion Esty made a motion to enter into a severance agreement with Bruce Nelson the Public Works Foreman, as outlined by staff. Darrell Carman seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 4-0.

7. **ADJOURN**

Mayor Hobart-Hardin adjourned the City Council at 9:30 p.m.


Sharon Hobart-Hardin, Mayor

ATTEST:


Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder
(Minutes prepared by Dhennehan)